

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 233 414

CS 504 340

AUTHOR Haskins, Jack B.
TITLE A Comparison of Bad News on Radio and Television
Using the News Morbidity Scale.
INSTITUTION Tennessee Univ., Knoxville. Coll. of
Communications.
SPONS AGENCY National Association of Broadcasters, Washington,
D.C.
PUB DATE Apr 83
NOTE 27p.; Report from the Communications Research Center,
University of Tennessee/Knoxville.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Commercial Television; *Comparative Analysis;
Measurement Techniques; *Media Research; News Media;
*News Reporting; *Radio
IDENTIFIERS *Negative News; News Morbidity Scale

ABSTRACT

A reliable "news morbidity" scale was developed to measure the prevalence of bad and good news on radio and television; the scale was then used in a pilot study of one city's news output. The news morbidity scale is a seven-step scale ranging from "extremely bad" to "extremely good" news. A sample of 945 television and 1,105 radio news stories were selected from 11 commercial radio stations and three commercial television stations in a southeastern metropolitan area. The major variables recorded include item position in program; adjacency to commercials; time, day, and week; and network or local origin. The results indicated that both radio and television news were predominantly negative, 57.4% bad for radio and 60.4% bad for television. Television also had more good news than radio, 38.9% to 31.2%. Television thus appeared to be the medium of more dramatic news, both positive and negative, while radio fare tended to be somewhat more neutral or bland. On television news programs, the most negative items appeared in the first position, the more negative items were separated from commercials and announcements, and the news was more negative during the early morning wake-up period. The results indicated that radio and television do not operate by all the same rules in their handling of bad and good news. It appears that television may have some more explicit constant policies regarding handling of bad news, while radio handles it in a more random or haphazard fashion. (HTH)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

ED233414

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve
reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this docu-
ment do not necessarily represent official NIE
position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Jack B. Haskins

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

A REPORT FROM THE

Communications Research Center



A Comparison of Bad News on Radio and
Television Using the News Morbidity Scale

by Jack B. Haskins

April, 1983

College of Communications
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE/KNOXVILLE 37916

CS 504340

A Comparison of Bad News on Radio and
Television, Using the "News Morbidity" Scale

By Jack B. Haskins

Dr. Haskins is Professor of Communication
and Journalism in the College of Communication,
University of Tennessee, Knoxville. This research
was supported by a grant from the National
Association of Broadcasters.

Abstract

A Comparison of Bad News on Radio and
Television, Using the "News Morbidity" Scale

A highly reliable "News Morbidity" Scale was developed to measure the prevalence of bad and good news on radio and television, which was then used in a pilot study of one city's news output.

A Comparison of Bad News on Radio and Television
Using the "News Morbidity" Scale

A recent review of communications and psychological research literature¹ contains several conclusions that point to "bad news" as an important topic for research. There is a swelling wave of perceptions by the public and diverse observers that "there is too much bad news"; the amount of bad news generally exceeds good news and gets extra-prominent display in both newspapers and television; gatekeepers overselect the available bad news and thus the news media present a negatively distorted view of reality.

But the most important reason for studying bad news is that it can have negative effects on people and on the media which carry it. Even one short radio newscast of four "bad news" items has caused listeners to become more depressed and to evaluate other people more negatively² as well as to reduce behavioral assistance to a person needing help³. Other experiments have shown that even a single bad or good radio news item can have corresponding effects on listeners⁴: a good news item produces more cooperation toward strangers as well as improved attitudes and behavior toward known individuals; a bad news item decreases both the perception of a community's benevolence and general "positive social outlook", while it creates negative attitudes and behavior toward impersonal anonymous groups.

Correlational evidence--admittedly not as compelling as the experimental studies just cited--point to some imitative or suggestive effects of bad news. Suicide news in newspapers is followed by a significant increase in the number of suicides in the U.S.⁵ as well as in Great Britain.⁶

Additionally, automobile deaths increased by one-third after suicide news appeared in California newspapers.⁷ Conversely, it has been found that during newspaper strikes there is a significant decline in suicides among young women⁸ and a significant decrease in various crimes.⁹ Corresponding effects may be hypothesized for radio and television.

There is also strong recent evidence that an excessive amount of bad news can damage the image of the news medium carrying it. A controlled experiment involving five different versions of a community newspaper--from an "extremely bad news" to an "extremely good news" treatment--found that the image of the newspaper became progressively more negative with the amount of bad news carried.¹⁰ The negative news treatments caused the newspaper to be perceived by its readers as less desirable to subscribe to, less trustworthy, less important, more biased, less satisfying and less professional; it was also seen as a malevolent influence on the community, less suitable for children, less constructive, lacking genuine concern for the community, less lively, less friendly to the reader, less balanced, and even the advertising was deemed less trustworthy.

Radio and television may also tarnish their reputations and advertising effectiveness in the long run if they over-emphasize bad news.

That possibility, combined with the demonstrable negative effects on audience moods, attitudes, and behavior, lends some urgency to finding out more about the prevalence and prominence of bad news in the broadcast media. The present study, financed in part by a National Association of Broadcasters research grant, was conducted for two purposes: (1) to develop a systematic and objective method for measuring the degree of bad and good news on radio and television, and (2) to conduct a pilot study using the new method to serve as benchmark data for future studies.

Previous Research on Broadcast News Negativity

There have been relatively few studies on the prevalence of bad news on television, and none at all were found concerning radio. The studies uncovered apparently used differing or unreported methods of content analysis, making it difficult to make systematic comparisons among studies.

An anecdote, however, reveals one prevailing impression of negativity in television news. Edward Barrett, after reviewing entries for the duPont journalism awards, came away from the experience with a gloomy impression of the state of television news.¹¹ As he stated it,

"The depression stems from the fact that the overwhelming majority of nominated programs deals with the seamy or downbeat side of society--crime, incest, child abuse, mental hospitals, governmental chicanery, airplane crashes, arson, poverty, pollution and disease . . . there is only an occasional upbeat program. . . . The message seems to be that TV documentary producers believe the best thing they can do is to expose the worst in our society." (p. 24)

Anecdotes don't make evidence of course, but Barrett's feelings are substantiated to some degree in more rigorous studies. One study shows that the news judgements of TV gatekeepers are influenced heavily by elements of conflict.¹² Another study concludes that TV news presents political authority figures in more of a negative than a positive light.¹³ Television news conveys an inordinate degree of human helplessness, by emphasizing disaster, chaos, unpredictability and heightened drama.¹⁴ During the summer of 1970, network TV evening newscasts consisted of about

one-third bad news, which was, however, given heavy prominence through placement in the early parts of the program and through greater use of visual aids to the stories; ABC carried significantly more negative news than either CBS or NBC.¹⁵ During the spring of 1970, CBS was found to contain about one-half bad news, more than twice as much as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation during that time;¹⁶ additionally news items containing aggression were longer than nonaggression items. One 1970 study showing an equal amount of violence on TV and newspaper front pages¹⁷ while Bogart¹⁸ concludes that TV contains more bad news than newspapers. The evidence on sheer quantity is thus spotty and inconclusive.

One must conclude that a comprehensive picture of the prevalence and prominence of negative news on radio and television awaits some standardized procedures for use in comparative and longitudinal studies. The present study was intended to help remedy those needs.

Method

The present study included, first, the development of a "News Morbidity" scale to determine the classification of items on the bad-to-good news dimension, and, second, the use of that scale for a comparative content analysis of news in one city.

The News Morbidity Scale: This is a seven-step scale ranging from "extremely bad news" to "extremely good news." In another paper now in preparation, the full procedures for determining both intra-coder and inter-coder reliability are described in detail; however, the results may be summarized briefly. The test-retest reliability coefficient of the scale for 18 coders had a mean value of $+0.88$; the agreement among coders was also extremely high, with a value of $+0.979$ for Cronbach's coefficient alpha

statistic. Full definitions of terms and coding instructions are contained in a paper available from the author.¹⁹ The coders worked from the following scale values, with every news item classified into one of the seven categories:

The News Morbidity Scale

- 1 Extremely bad news
- 2 Very bad news
- 3 Slightly bad news
- 4 Neutral or balanced news
- 5 Slightly good news
- 6 Very good news
- 7 Extremely good news

Approximately two dozen undergraduate and graduate student coders were able to use the scale without difficulty, after a brief training period, to analyze the hundreds of news items sampled in the pilot study.

Data Collection Method: A full report of data collection methodology is given in an earlier paper and thesis.²⁰ Briefly, however, the procedure was as follows:

1. Eleven commercial radio stations and three commercial television stations from the Knoxville metropolitan area were designated as the station population. For this analysis, the overlapping period during which both radio and television was sampled was May 11 - June 20, 1981.

2. A sample of 945 television and 1105 radio news stories were selected. News program listings in the newspaper and station schedules were examined to select a sample of news programs, stratified by day of week, independent or network affiliation, and AM or FM frequency, to insure representativeness in those regards; random selection of programs within strata was accomplished by interval sampling. Every news item within the randomly selected programs was then analyzed.

3. Each program in the sample was monitored personally and audio-tape recorded, with a separate cassette for each day's programs, for each medium. In addition, television programs were monitored visually for visual prominence devices used to supplement the verbal output.

4. After recording, the pertinent information was transferred to code sheets for tabulation. Three sets of data were coded for each news items, one set each for station, program, and item variables. The major variables included in the present report, apart from the radio vs. television comparison, are item position in program, adjacency to commercials and announcements, time of day, day of week, week of month, origin by network or local stations, television visual display, AM or FM radio, and radio station programming policy. Differences on these variables were analyzed by a one-way analysis of variance, fixed effects, for each medium separately.

Findings

Total Sample: Both radio and television news are predominantly negative, 57.4% bad for radio and 60.4% bad for television. This is the highest proportion of bad news found in any previously published study anywhere. Television also had more good news items than radio, 38.9% to 31.2%; this results in a higher proportion of neutral items carried on radio, 11.4% to 0.6%. Television thus is seen to be a medium of more dramatic news, both positive and negative, while radio fare tends to be somewhat more neutral or bland. See Table I for the complete distribution of items on the 7-point "Extremely bad" to "Extremely good" scale.

EDITOR: INSERT TABLE I HERE

Item position in program. On television news programs, the most negative items appear in the first position, with the items becoming steadily more positive until the last item in the program, which is least negative. These differences by position are highly significant for television, as seen in Table II. In radio, the differences among different positions in the news program are minor and not statistically significant. In short, radio does not give position priority to negative news, while television does.

EDITOR: INSERT TABLE II HERE

Adjacency to non-news: On television, the most negative items are separated from commercials and announcements, while the more positive news items are placed between commercials or announcements. These differences by adjacency to non-news are highly significant, as shown in Table III. On radio news programs, adjacency to announcements is not significantly related to news negativism, though there is a tendency for the most negative items to appear between announcements--exactly opposite to the television practice.

EDITOR: INSERT TABLE III HERE

Time of day: Television news tends to be more negative during the early morning wake-up period, 6 to 9 a.m., than at any other time of day; the most positive news time is in the late morning 9 a.m. to noon period. These differences in TV time periods are not quite significant at the usual

levels (Prob. .11) but the tendency is very strong. On radio, bad and good news does not vary significantly by time of day, though there is a weak tendency for the most negative news to appear in the early evening 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. period. See Table IV.

EDITOR: INSERT TABLE IV HERE

Day of week: Neither radio nor television news varies significantly in negativism on different days of the weeks. However, for both media, there are slight tendencies for the most positive news to appear on Saturday, as shown in Table V.

EDITOR: INSERT TABLE V HERE

Week of month: Radio news is significantly more positive during the first week of the month, and most negative in the second week, as shown in Table VI. While television news does not vary significantly by weeks, there is a tendency for news to be more positive during the first week, parallel to the findings for radio.

EDITOR: INSERT TABLE VI HERE

Networks and local: Comparing local and network news program origins for news negativity, the results approach but do not quite reach significance for both radio and television, as seen in Table VII. For radio, ABC tends to be the most negative and NBC the most positive network. Television bears little resemblance in this regard, with CBS tending to be the most negative

source and local programs as the most positive; NBC tends to be the most positive of the networks.

EDITOR: INSERT TABLE VII HERE

Television display devices: There is a highly significant relationship (Prob. .01) between news negativity and the use of visual prominence devices on television. The most negative news received the greatest use of accentuating devices such as slides in the background, still pictures, additional film with interviews, use of reporters, etc. See Table VIII.

EDITOR: INSERT TABLE VIII HERE

Other radio relationships: A number of radio-only variables, not applicable to television, were compared with the bad-good news ratings with the following results:

1. Network stations carry significantly more negative news than non-network stations (Probability .05)
2. AM stations are significantly more negative than FM stations (Probability .05)
3. Programming policy is a significant variable. "Top 40" and Religious stations are the most negative, while Beautiful Music and Progressive stations are the most positive (Probability .01)

There were no significant differences among stations on a number of other variables: daylight vs. 24-hour operation; commercial vs. religious stations; low vs. medium vs. high power; independent vs. chain vs. conglomerate ownership; one vs. two syndicated news services.

Discussion

It is clear that radio and television do not operate by all the same rules in their handling of bad and good news.

It is true that both radio and television are predominantly negative in the news handled and to almost the same degree, with about six out of ten items classified as "bad news." Whether this negativism is based on implicit or explicit policy is unknown, but one suspects it is the former. Both media tend to have more positive news on Saturday and more negative news on Sunday; this may be a true reflection of the "real world" of events, with fluctuations in negative and positive events on those days. Both media tend to be more positive during the first week of the month, this possibly related to more positive (or fewer negative) events during that particular week; one can only speculate on the reasons why this may be so. They are similar in the composition of network news, with NBC being the most positive news network on both radio and television; this may be due to network news policy or it might be purely coincidental.

However, the positive and negative news balance differs for radio and television in several important respects. Television tends to place bad news as the first item or early in the program, radio does not. Television separates bad news so that it is not adjacent to commercials and other announcements, while radio places bad news between or adjacent to commercials and announcements; if bad news does indeed "contaminate" the reaction to adjacent advertising, as has been found to be true for newspapers,²¹ then this could be detrimental to the effectiveness of radio commercials.

Television and radio differ in the time of day the most negative news is presented; television is most negative during the early morning wake-up

6 to 9 a.m. period, radio is most negative in the early evening 6 to 9 p.m. period. And, while NBC is the most positive network for both media, the most negative news network is ABC for radio and CBS for television. Another difference is that local news tends to be more positive than network news on television, while on radio local news is more negative than network news.

One is left with the overall impression that television may have some more explicit constant policies regarding handling of bad news, while radio handles it in a more random or haphazard fashion. That impression comes from the greater number of statistically significant (meaning non-random) differences in timing and placement of bad news on television--more prominent display, upfront placement, separation from commercials and announcements, and early-morning concentration. On the other hand, these significant differences may be due to the mechanical artifacts of the way TV news is gathered and processed rather than to any conscious policy.

The differences among networks in the amount of bad news may be generalized to all network news coverage across the country, since network news programs are identical in all localities. However, some of the other findings of this study may be peculiar to Knoxville alone, or due to the particular time period covered, or due to the methods of measurement used in this study. These questions can be resolved by further research using this same standardized method to analyze the news content of other radio and television stations in other communities in other periods of time.

It is recommended that the demonstrably reliable News Morbidity Scale be used in further analysis of broadcast news in comparisons of various cities, of various regions of the country, of various types of stations, of various networks and among the other variables that might influence the balance of bad and good news. Certainly, if an excessive amount of bad

news does have negative effects on people, on society's institutions, on the response to advertising, and on the attitudes toward the carrying media, as has been indicated in other studies, broadcasters might wish to give more conscious attention to their policies regarding bad news and perhaps sponsor more research in this regard.²²

Table I
News Morbidity Distribution for Radio and TV

<u>Scale Value</u>	<u>Radio</u>		<u>TV</u>	
	<u>f</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>f</u>	<u>%</u>
(1) Extremely bad	25	2.3%	37	3.9%
(2) Very bad	171	15.5	182	19.3
(3) Slightly bad	438	39.6	352	37.2
(4) Neutral	126	11.4	6	0.6
(5) Slightly good	268	24.3	275	29.1
(6) Very good	68	6.1	81	8.6
(7) Extremely good	9	0.8	12	1.3
TOTAL	1105	100.0	945	100.0
Mean Rating	3.61		3.63	
Standard Deviation	1.28		1.45	
<u>Collapsed Scores</u>				
(1-3) All bad combined	57.4%		60.4%	
(4) Neutral	11.4		0.6	
(5-7) All good combined	31.2		38.9	
Morbidity Index (Bad-Good)	-26.2		-21.5	

Table II

Mean News Morbidity by Position of Item in Program

<u>Position in Program</u>	<u>Scale Mean</u>		<u>% Bad News</u>	
	<u>Radio</u>	<u>TV</u>	<u>Radio</u>	<u>TV</u>
1st item	3.57	3.05	58.7	82.9
1st third of program	3.61	3.48	55.4	65.3
Middle third	3.61	3.63	57.2	60.1
Last third	3.67	3.77	57.1	54.7
Last item	3.61	4.09	57.9	45.6
TOTAL	3.61	3.63	57.4	60.4

(Significance Probability) (.96 (.0001
 Not Highly
 sig.) sig.)

Table III

Mean News Morbidity by Adjacency to Non-News

<u>Adjacency to Non-News</u>	<u>Scale</u>		<u>% Bad News</u>	
	<u>Radio</u>	<u>TV</u>	<u>Radio</u>	<u>TV</u>
Not Adjacent	3.62	3.59	56.8	61.0
Just before	3.63	3.70	56.8	62.7
Just after	3.64	3.46	58.4	63.7
Between two	3.40	4.52	61.3	28.3
(Significance Probability)	(.61	(.0001		
	Not	Highly		
	sig.)	sig.)		

Table IV

Mean News Morbidity by Time of Day of Program

<u>Time of Day</u>	<u>Scale Mean</u>		<u>% Bad News</u>	
	<u>Radio</u>	<u>TV</u>	<u>Radio</u>	<u>TV</u>
Midnight - 3 A.M.	3.52	—	63.9	—
3 - 6 A.M.	3.63	—	55.5	—
6 - 9 A.M.	3.57	3.54	59.7	63.6
9 - Noon	3.61	4.58	57.0	26.3
Noon - 3 P.M.	3.69	3.60	56.8	63.0
3 - 6 P.M.	3.66	3.57	54.5	57.1
6 - 9 P.M.	3.49	3.63	64.6	59.8
9 - Midnight	3.64	3.58	50.0	60.9
(Significance Probability)	(.96	(.11		
	Not	Not		
	sig.)	sig.)		

Table V
Mean News Morbidity by Day of Week

<u>Day of Week</u>	<u>Scale Mean</u>		<u>% Bad News</u>	
	<u>Radio</u>	<u>TV</u>	<u>Radio</u>	<u>TV</u>
Sunday	3.44	3.48	56.5	60.9
Monday	3.57	3.59	58.7	62.6
Tuesday	3.66	3.68	57.6	54.5
Wednesday	3.67	3.69	54.7	58.5
Thursday	3.56	3.46	58.4	66.7
Friday	3.54	3.62	61.5	60.5
Saturday	3.81	3.72	51.9	55.6
(Significance Probability)	(.48	(.81		
	Not	Not		
	sig.)	sig.)		

Table VI
Mean News Morbidity by Week of Month

<u>Week of Month</u>	<u>Scale</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>% Bad News</u>	
	<u>Radio</u>	<u>TV</u>	<u>Radio</u>	<u>TV</u>
First (1-7)	3.84	3.71	46.3	58.1
Second (8-14)	3.43	3.68	65.3	58.6
Third (15-21)	3.63	3.66	58.6	59.8
Fourth (22-31)	3.64	3.51	53.5	63.5
(Significance Probability)	(.007 Highly sig.)	(.41 Not sig.)		

Table VII
Mean News Morbidity by Networks

<u>Network</u>	<u>Scale Mean</u>		<u>% Bad News</u>	
	<u>Radio</u>	<u>TV</u>	<u>Radio</u>	<u>TV</u>
ABC	3.46	3.44	63.6	64.4
CBS	3.68	3.37	55.5	67.3
NBC	3.87	3.59	47.8	60.8
Total Network	3.60	3.46	58.1	64.3

Table VIIA
Mean News Morbidity by Local vs. Network Origin

<u>Origin</u>	<u>Scale Mean</u>		<u>% Bad News</u>	
	<u>Radio</u>	<u>TV</u>	<u>Radio</u>	<u>TV</u>
Local	3.60	3.71	57.5	58.5
All networks	3.60	3.46	58.1	64.3
(Significance Probability)	(not sig.)	(.067 almost sig.)		

Table VIII
Mean TV News Morbidity, by Use of Visual
Prominence Devices

<u>Extra Visual Display</u>	<u>TV Mean</u>	<u>% Bad News TV</u>
Level 1 (least prominent)	3.52	64.3
Level 2	3.76	54.7
Level 3	3.78	56.7
Level 4 (most prominent)	3.06	81.3
(Significance Probability)	(.009 Highly sig.)	

Footnotes

- 1 Jack B. Haskins, "The Trouble With Bad News," Newspaper Research Journal, 2:3-16 (January 1981)
- 2 Russell Veitch and William Griffitt, "Good News-Bad News, Affective and Interpersonal Effects," Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 6:69-75, (1976).
- 3 Russell Veitch, Robert Dewood and Kathy Bosko, "Radio News Broadcasts, Their Effects on Interpersonal Helping," Sociometry, 40:383-386 (1977).
- 4 Julie A. Blackman and Harvey A. Hornstein, "Newscasts and the Social Actuary," Public Opinion Quarterly, 41:295-313 (Fall, 1977).
- 5 David P. Phillips, "The Influence of Suggestion on Suicide: Substantive and Theoretical Implications of the Werther Effect," American Sociological Review, 39:340-354 (June 1974).
- 6 B. Baraclough, D. Shepherd and C. Jennings, "Do Newspaper Reports of Coroner's Inquests Incite People to Commit Suicide?" British Journal of Psychiatry, 131:528-532 (1977).
- 7 David P. Phillips, "Suicide, Motor Vehicle Fatalities, and the Mass Media: Evidence Toward a Theory of Suggestion," American Journal of Sociology, 84:1150-1174 (1979).
- 8 Jerome A. Motto, "Newspaper Influence on Suicide," Archives of General Psychiatry, 23:143-148 (1970); Sol Blumenthal and Lawrence Bergner, "Suicide and Newspapers: A Replicated Study," American Journal of Psychiatry, 130:468-471 (April 1973).
- 9 David Payne and Kaye Payne, "Newspapers and Crime in Detroit," Journalism Quarterly, 47:233-238, 308 (Summer 1970).
- 10 Jack B. Haskins and M. Mark Miller, "The Effects of Bad News and Good News on a Newspaper's Image," Journalism Quarterly, in press (1983).

- 11 Edward W. Barrett, "TV Trends," Columbia Journalism Review, November/December 1979, p. 24.
- 12 James K. Buckalew, "News Elements and Selection by Television News Editors," Journal of Broadcasting, 14:47-54 (Winter 1969-70).
- 13 G. L. Wamsley and R. A. Pride, "Television Network News: Rethinking the Iceberg Problem," Western Political Quarterly, 25:434-450 (1972)
- 14 Grace F. Levine, "Learned Helplessness and the Evening News," Journal of Communications, 27:100-103 (1977).
- 15 Dennis T. Lowry, "Gresham's Law and Network TV News Selection," Journal of Broadcasting, 15:397-408 (1971).
- 16 Benjamin D. Singer, "Violence, Protest and War in Television News: The U.S. and Canada Compared," Public Opinion Quarterly, 34:611-616 (1970)
- 17 D. G. Clark and W. B. Blankenburg, "Trends in Violent Content in Selected Mass Media," In G.A. Comstock and E.A. Rubinstein, editors, Television and Social Behavior, Volume I. (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972)
- 18 Leo Bogart, Press and Public: Who Needs What, When, Where and Why in American Newspapers, (Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1981).
- 19 Jack B. Haskins, "The News Morbidity Scale: Coding Instructions for Analysis of the Good-Bad Dimension of News," (Knoxville: Communications Research Center, University of Tennessee, 1982).
- 20 Jack B. Haskins, Sally Ringo and Pamela Doyle, "Bad News on Radio and Television: A Methodological and Descriptive Study," in Herbert Howard, editor, Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Communications Research Symposium, (Knoxville: College of Communications, University of Tennessee, 1982); Pamela Doyle, "A Descriptive Study of Bad-Good News Content in Television Newscasts," unpublished master's thesis (Knoxville: University of Tennessee, 1982)

7
21 Martha Rogers, "Effects of Positive vs. Negative News on Newspaper Advertising Response," unpublished Ph. D. dissertation (Knoxville: University of Tennessee, 1983).

22 The author is grateful to graduate students Sally Ringo, Pam Doyle, and Lewis Walker for extensive assistance in data collection and analysis.